



***In Support Of SB 753: AN ACT CONCERNING THE COUNTING OF INCARCERATED PERSONS FOR PURPOSES OF DETERMINING LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS***

Good Morning Senator Flexer, Representative Fox and members of the Committee. Our union represents about 26,000 health care workers in Connecticut, in the public and private sector. Many of our members are people of color. More specifically, they are most often women of color, many of whom live in Connecticut's under-resourced communities.

Today we are submitting testimony in support of SB 753. While this bill may not seem to directly impact healthcare workers, it does. When the urban areas from which most incarcerated persons come from in our state receive less representation because of the practice of prison gerrymandering, it means that our members who live in those areas have less representation and less voice in the Capitol.

Over the past few years, we have seen assault after assault on our nation's democratic institutions along with the systematic suppression of the votes of people of color. We have seen the Supreme Court throw out key parts of the federal Voting Rights Act. In this context, it is crucial that Connecticut take active steps to strengthen our democracy and ensure that people of color are fairly represented in our political institutions. This is a matter of racial justice and basic fairness.

And we must act now, because redistricting is imminent. The 2021 legislative session is the last opportunity of the decade to end prison gerrymandering and adopt fair maps.

In the wake of the movements for racial justice over the past year, there has been much discussion of "equity" during this legislative session. Passing this bill would be a concrete step toward that goal.

CT led the nation by reinstituting voting rights to individuals on probation in 2001. Ten other states have enacted legislation to end prison gerrymandering. It's time for our state to once again lead and do what's right. We urge you to pass SB 753.

Thank you.